

Countermeasures for Fostering the NCS Learning Modules

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1. Objectives of the Study

This study was aimed at drawing the policy recommendations for fostering NCS learning modules in the NCS-based human resources systems based upon analyzing the roles and status of NCS learning modules as well as practical issues in using learning modules in various fields. For this research aim, the study used the literature review, consultation from the specialists, and quantitative survey on the using NCS learning modules and developing the NCS-based curriculum.

2. Concepts and Issues of NCS Learning Modules

With the government affairs, ‘the Realization of Competency-based Society’, as a momentum, the National Competency Standards (NCS) and NCS learning modules are developed as the basic infrastructure for linkage between job, qualification, education and training.

Specifically, the Government has its goal to develop the infrastructure for NCS-based human resources systems as soon as possible, with the development schedule of NCS and NCS learning modules. The NCS is scheduled to finish the development by 2014 and the NCS learning module is scheduled to finish between 2013 and 2015.

However, several conceptual issues need to be paid attention for fostering the NCS learning modules.

First, the characteristics of NCS learning modules should be arranged. The NCS learning modules has the characteristics of learning materials for the NCS competency units. For this characteristics, the utilization of NCS learning modules would be limited if the NCS competency units were modified or partially utilized in the education and training sector. This issue

could be due to the conceptual ambiguity between NCS learning modules and NCS-based curriculum. In other words, it is not clear whether the NCS learning modules as learning materials would be conceptually preferred to the NCS-based curriculum. Therefore, the characteristics and status of NCS learning modules should be arranged based upon the linkages between NCS, education and training programs, and qualification framework.

The second issue is about the target of NCS learning modules. Because the NCS learning modules is developed for each NCS unit, the targets of learning modules are subject to the NCS unit levels. However, the NCS levels, which are assigned for each competency unit, are not perfect. The consistency and validity of the NCS levels are not sufficient. For this reason, the clear standard should be constructed for the target of each NCS learning module.

Third, the quality control system should be established for developing and maintaining the NCS learning modules. Especially, the NCS learning modules quality control systems should give some guidelines for the modification of related NCS units and its learning modules, as well as guidelines for effectively using the NCS learning modules.

Conceptually, the NCS learning modules has its goals to boost effective utilization of the NCS units in the fields of education and training. It means that the concept of NCS learning modules is subject to the utilization of NCS units. Therefore, the NCS learning modules should be developed and conceptualized based upon the its linkage between education and qualifications.

3. Survey Results on the Trends of NCS Learning Modules

This study conducted the survey for analyzing the current status of utilizing the NCS learning modules in education and training institutes or workplace. The survey were conducted with 179 subjects which were NCS learning modules developers in 2013. The major findings were as follows:

First, countermeasures for supporting the development of NCS-based curriculum should be sought. At present, the policy encouragement and support are provided in developing and maintaining the NCS-based curriculum in vocational high schools and technical colleges. However, any policy support is not given for 4-year colleges. In addition, the specific guidelines for developing the curriculum using the NCS units or unit elements and utilizing the NCS learning modules are lacking.

Second, the survey results required the deliberation about the roles on NCS

learning modules. Many respondents agreed that NCS learning modules should be learning materials or supporting materials of NCS-based curriculum. However, our respondents pointed out that the NCS learning modules did not have sufficient amount of knowledge or skills. For this reason, teachers or tutors could develop additional learning materials when using the NCS learning modules.

Third, respondents pointed out the possibility that educational institutes could encounter the difficulty of developing teaching and learning rather than developing the NCS-based curriculum. Many responded that schools or teachers are lacking in the preparation for learning required in NCS. This means that much deliberations should be given for maintaining the NCS-based curriculum.

4. Recommendations

Based upon the results of literature review, consultations and discussions with specialists, and survey, this study gives some policy recommendations as follows:

- ☐ Improving the infrastructure for utilizing the NCS learning modules
 - Establishing the monitoring system of the NCS learning modules
 - Sharing the various cases of teaching plans or texts based upon the NCS learning modules
 - Improving the on-line based system of maintaining and delivering the NCS learning modules
 - Using the industrial/sectoral bodies for maintaining and managing the NCS learning modules
- ☐ Improving the development system of NCS learning modules
 - Clarifying the concept of NCS learning modules in linked with NCS-based curriculum
 - Strengthening the development process of NCS learning modules for flexibility
 - Developing the underpinning knowledge or skills that not included in NCS into learning modules
- ☐ Clarifying the concept of NCS-based curriculum for fostering the NCS

learning modules

- Setting up the standards of using the NCS units for developing the NCS-based curriculum
- Setting up the guidelines for managing and evaluating the NCS-based curriculum
- Introducing the accreditation system of NCS-based curriculum